463 possess tea and coffee estates of their own. The rising
197 generation are, to some extent, learning Tamil and English, in addition to their own language, which is said to resemble old Canarese. And I have heard a youthful Badaga, tending a flock of sheep, address an errant
871 member thereof in very fluent Billingsgate. There were,
[877] in 1904–1905, thirty-nine Badaga schools, which were attended by 1,222 pupils. In 1907, one Badaga had passed the Matriculation of the Madras University, and was a clerk in the Sub-judge's Court at Ootacamund.

182 A newspaper discussion was carried on a few years ago as to the condition of the Badagas, and whether they are a down-trodden tribe, bankrupt and impoverished to such a degree that it is only a short time before something must be done to ameliorate their condition, and save them from extermination by inducing them to
(166) emigrate to the Wynād and Vizagapatam. A few have, in recent years, migrated to the Anaimalai hills, to work on the planters' estates, which have been opened up there. One writer stated that "the tiled houses, costing from Rs. 250 to Rs. 500, certainly point to their pros-
• 426 perity. They may frequently borrow from the Labbai to enable them to build, but, as I do not know of a single case in which the Labbai has ever seized the house and sold it, I believe this debt is soon discharged.
241 The walled-in, terraced fields immediately around their villages, on which they grow their barley and other grains requiring rich cultivation, are well worked, and
527 regularly manured. The coats, good thick blankets, and gold ear-rings, which most Badagas now possess, can only, I think, point to their prosperity, while their constant feasts, and disinclination to work on Sundays, show that the loss of a few days' pay does not affect
181 them. On the other hand, a former Native official on

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AM50 Badaga AM50

181 the Nīlgiris writes to me that "though the average Badaga is thrifty and hard-working, there is a tendency for him to be lazy when he is sure of his meal. When a 574 person is sick in another village, his relatives make it an (241) excuse to go and see him, and they have to be fed. When the first crop is raised, the idler pretends that 'worms' have crept into the crop, and the gods have to • 426 be propitiated, and there is a feast. Marriage or death, of course, draws a crowd to be fed or feasted. All this means extra expenditure, and a considerable drain on the slender income of the family. The Rowthan (Muhammadan merchant) from the Tamil country is near at hand to lend money, as he has carried his bazar to the very heart of the Badaga villages. First it is a bag of rāgi (food grain), a piece of cloth to throw on the coffin, or a few rupees worth of rice and curry-stuff doled out by the all-accommodating Rowthan at a price out of all proportion to the market rate, and at a rate ranging from six pies to two annas for the rupee. The ever impecunious Badaga has no means of extricating himself, with a slender income, which leaves no margin for redeeming debts. The bond is renewed every quarter or half year, and the debt grows by leaps and bounds, and consumes 691 all his earthly goods, including lands. The advent of lawyers on the hills has made the Badagas a most litigious people, and they resort to the courts, which means expenditure of money, and neglect of agriculture." In the funeral song of the Badagas, which has been translated by Mr. Gover,* one of the crimes enumerated, for which atonement must be made, is that of preferring a complaint to the Sirkar (Government), and one of their (538) numerous proverbs embodies the same idea. "If you

* Folk-songs of Southern India.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

increasingly loath to share a relatively high income with his extended family. Thus large joint families are no longer as common as they were half a century ago: an average Badaga household today contains only 5.5 members, and the range in size is from one to perhaps twenty.

LINEAGE

Several joint families able to agree on precisely how they are descended from a common male ancestor consider themselves a *minimal* or a *minor lineage* (in Baḍagu, *guppu*). This is an exogamous and patrilineal group living in a single village and is the most important lineage for members, often the only one they know by name. It tends to split into two lineages every four or five generations. The *guppu* is a unit within which interest-free loans are obtained and which even today has a buffalo herd in common. It no longer holds land in common, though at its inception the joint family of the founder did, and each descendant is still entitled to a proportion of his land. This lineage tends to hold family ceremonies together. If further participants are wanted at such ceremonies the remainder of the *major lineage* (in Baḍagu, *kutti*) can be invited. This consists of at least two minor lineages the leaders of which can trace their ancestry back to a common founder. Very often the major lineages in one or several neighbouring villages summate to a *maximal lineage* (in Baḍagu, *kuḍumbu*) and responsible members can trace their actual descent from its founder, too. All levels of lineage can be referred to by a founder's name, though in many villages no more than one level is now recognized. Lineages of all levels may be invited to attend family ceremonies.

From the example in Diagram 6 it can be seen that a maximal lineage has a depth of about seven generations. As at O:ranayi the maximal lineage is very often coterminous with the village, which explains the exogamy of most villages. There are, however, some exceptional villages, notably those of the Wodeas and Toreas, and of the Gaudas of So:lu:ru commune and Ha:sanu:ru, which contain several distinct lineages from *different* clans within each village; so that while exogamy still marks the lineage it is not characteristic of the villages.

There is a strong sense of lineage solidarity, strongest at the minor level but still significant at the maximal. In case of a dispute

21 Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AN50 Badaga AN50

their Nilgiri acquisitions for further produce to take up to the hills.

According to modern Badaga informants their forebears did not use cash at the Ootacamund market during the first two decades of its existence. They exchanged the products of their own lands for the foodstuffs brought up by Chettis. In this way the Nilgiri Plateau was exporting a variety of goods to Ka:ramuḍu and its environs, especially clarified butter, onions, honey, coriander, opium and millet hay.

The initial period of barter in the bazaar passed as the town acquired a few regular shops. Later in the nineteenth century coinage came into use in the market, now open every day, and a government superintendent fixed the day's prices (Ouchterlony, *1848, 72; Price, 1908, 187*). One could even borrow money there at 2 or 3% per month interest (depending on the security). Monday and Tuesday in Ootacamund, Thursday in Sirumuge, Friday in Ka:ramuḍu and Saturday in Me:ṭṭupa:ḷaya[1] are however still called 'shandy days',[21] and it is still customary for Badagas to visit the Nilgiri towns on Monday, their weekly holiday, and to send truckloads of farm produce to Me:ṭṭupa:ḷáya or to Ka:ramuḍu each Friday. The transition to exclusive use of coinage in the market took a very long time, for as recently as 1924 Gaymard was able to remark that when they made their weekly trips to town some Badagas did not carry a purse but instead a basket or sackful of grain which they would exchange there for salt, pimentos, utensils and cloth (Gaymard, 1924, 2–3).

ITINERANT TRADERS ON THE PLATEAU

Both before and after these town bazaars were established the Badagas maintained another kind of link with the lowland economy. Chettis from villages lying directly east of the Nilgiris used to (and still do) come up onto the plateau once a month on foot for petty trading. Badagas call them Regional Chettis *(na:ḍu ceṭṭi)*, in reference perhaps to the restricted range of each man's trading itinerary. Although living in a Tamil-speaking area their native tongue is Kannada. Their settlements in and near the towns of Sirumuge, Me:ṭṭupa:ḷaya and Ka:ramuḍu are concerned with petty trade, weaving and agriculture. The Chetti and his family weave cloth in their home for the Badagas; and until the advent of the Ootacamund bazaar they were the regular source for cloth

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

241 242 (654) government's making loans available on relatively easy terms for terrace construction (Grigg, 1880, 470; Ranga, 1934, 12–13).

As a result of terracing in many places and minute subdivision elsewhere, fields are usually so small that it has become inefficient, 241 if not impossible, to plough them (Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, (492) 249). For over forty years therefore the plough and oxen have rarely been seen on the plateau (Ranga, 1934, 12–13; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249; Noble, 1968, 144–145; see below, p. 167, n. 11). Much of the workload formerly carried by oxen is now taken by cheap migrant labourers from the plains; men work for daily wages of three rupees (equivalent to 40 cts. U.S.), and women for two (1970).

241 654 While the profits from potato, tea and coffee are very much higher per hectare than those from the traditional grain crops, the risks are also much greater. Not only does a farmer need ready cash to buy seed or cuttings, fertilizer and labour, but reserve cash is needed to feed his family should disease ruin the crop one season. Here the co-operative societies set up under state government guidance have helped Badagas somewhat, but less than [426] might be expected. Short-term loans are available against land securities for all members of a society,[20] and long-term loans are obtainable from the Land Mortgage Bank (established in 1937).

177 426 Before the appearance of these facilities the money-lender (a Tamilian Chettiar, a northern Marwari or a Moslem) was an ominous figure in the lives of many Badagas; for some he still is. Early in the present century the monthly interest on his loans ranged from 3% to 12.5% of the principal, but though these rates were quite extortionate loans were in general repaid (Thurston, 426 1909, vol. I, 64; Madras, 1928, 55; Ranga, 1934, 4). In the previous century not even these loan facilities were accessible to Badagas: they could only borrow from wealthy Badagas, preferably those related to the borrower by marriage but living in a village at some discreet distance from him. No interest was charged on such loans then.

452 426 The first Badaga co-operative society was formed at Kereha:da in 1911, the 'Kerhada Rice Rural Credit Society', named in reference to Mr. S. P. Rice, a former Collector who had initiated interest in the co-operative movement. At that time annual interest rates varied between 24% and 75% of the principal. By 1918 there were eighteen such societies, and by 1927 the plateau had fifty-four agricultural credit societies from which Badagas could get loans

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

452 426 (Madras, 1928, 55-57; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937. 249); while at present there are nearly two hundred. By about 1920 the Badaga co-operators

> could no longer hope to repay the loan from their earnings and in almost all cases they have had to part with their property for clearing their loans. The malady was aggravated by the imperfect education in co-operation imparted and the want of adequate supervision and control in the beginning. It was then realized that co-operative credit alone was not the remedy and attempts were made to secure for these tribes their necessaries of life at moderate price and save them from the clutches of the unscrupulous shopkeepers. A Purchase and Sale Society was started in 1919, which in 1923 converted itself into the Potato Growers' Purchase and Sale Society and attempted to control the market for potatoes with a view to secure a fair price for the potato crop. In 1924 a Labour Union was organized for their benefit. But all these steps proved of no avail. Want of loyalty on their part led to the collapse of the former in 1925. The latter society is doing no work now. Attempts are now being made to increase their earning capacity by introducing among the Badagas sericulture and improved poultry farming... (Madras, 1928, 56).

In 1954 the Reserve Bank of India initiated nation-wide an 'integrated scheme of rural credit' which tied the granting of loans to the marketing of the crop rather than to the amount of land available as security. The scheme was introduced in the Nilgiri co-operatives.

> The controlled credit scheme works through a linking of the village primary societies, the Nilgiris District Central Cooperative Bank, and the Nilgiris Marketing Society. The village primary societies (and individual members of the Marketing Society) get their seeds and manure from the Marketing Society; the Marketing Society sends the relevant indents and loan applications to the Central Bank for sanction; the members market their harvests (at least enough to cover the loans) through the Marketing Society; the Marketing Society sends the sales proceeds to the Central Bank; the Central Bank deducts the loans and sends the balance to the village primary societies

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

452 or individual members.

• 426 One difficulty in the scheme is that the maximum amount which any society can lend to an individual member is Rs. 2,000. Even at the inadequate rate of Rs. 500 per acre, members can get through cooperative channels only enough finance for the cultivation of four acres. In the various societies which I visited in the Nilgiris, the officers usually were substantial people with well more than four acres. It was a curious situation to find them put in a position where to meet their current needs, they had to go to private sources... They told me that they got about half of their credit from the society and the other half from the private merchant-moneylenders. Although they sold some of their produce to the marketing society, they usually sold the major portion through the private merchants. They explained that the merchants gave them much more credit than they could get from the society, on condition that they sell their produce through the merchants. They said that the cooperatives were rather inflexible about extending loans, whereas they could count on the merchants to carry them through a bad season or two. When there is a crop failure, they have to go to the private merchant and borrow from him to pay back their loan to the cooperative society... To them this was a kind of "cooperation" and was more important than anything else.

By contrast, when their loans became overdue, the cooperative society cut off their credit. The societies went by rules and regulations which did not benefit the members. They said that from the societies they did not get real cooperation.

These statements did not conflict with what I had been told earlier in the best cooperative agricultural bank in the Nilgiris. There members and office-bearers told me that the rules laid down by Government for the cooperatives were very hard and stringent. They tied the hands of the working officials who would like to do more. Everything was rules and circulars; there was no leeway, no room for initiative. What was crucial was the Government loan, the Government grant, the Government subsidy.

Lest this seem an exaggeration, it may be observed that in Ootacamund there are no less than four Deputy-Registrars of Cooperative Societies; one is General Deputy-Registrar; another is Special Deputy-Registrar to supervise credit and agricultural marketing; a third is in charge of the Cooperative

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

452 Central Bank; and the fourth runs the Marketing Society
● 426 (Thorner, 1964, 71–73).

426 The law today limits the monthly interest on pawned items to a rate varying from ¾% to 1¼%, depending on the size of the loan. Even so, loans between Badagas now command an interest rate of 1% to 4% per month; while the professional money-lenders also secretly charge interest beyond what they are entitled to. On a loan of up to Rs. 200, for example, the Marwari lender can legally charge only 1¼% per month simple interest. He gives a receipt for that rate but at the same time insists on one year's interest in advance, and compounded, at 2% per month. One can hardly castigate the Marwari for his cupidity, or the Badaga for still patronizing him, however, when one learns the scale of bribes which some local government officials expect in return for granting loans from the cooperative bank.

452 Yet the cooperative movement has gone a long way towards
(426) protecting Badagas from the high interest rates of private money-lenders; the Panchayat Unions and some multi-purpose societies even help farmers by supplying fertilizers, insecticides and modern equipment at cost prices. If these societies operate somewhat more effectively here than in other parts of India, the explanation lies in the fact that the Badaga societies are not in practice multi-caste institutions. They are run largely by and for the members of this one community, thus avoiding some of the factionalism and favouritism that commonly pervade such societies elsewhere.

MODERN SYSTEMS OF MARKETING

178 With the spread of urbanization during the mid-nineteenth
(966) century, other markets besides that at Ootacamund began to cater to the needs of local villagers. Regular weekly markets opened at Coonoor, Kotagiri, Wellington, and later in several villages at some distance from any town.[21] The use of these markets by the
(651) Badagas is related to two other developments discussed earlier:
(654) first, the payment of land revenues and the restriction on use of
(434) land caused by the Land Settlement and legislation to stop swidden farming in the forests; and secondly, the consequent movement of some Badaga labourers, including women and children, onto the tea and coffee plantations, where they earned a

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

increasingly valuable to the Badagas because of rising grain prices (Mandelbaum, 1955, 240).

For many Badagas with small land-holdings the transitional period between the two World Wars was marked by the frustrations of indebtedness. Pieces of their land were sometimes sold to non-Badagas in order to pay off outstanding debts—a previously inconceivable practice. Some men went as far as the Annamalai Hills for manual labouring. Badaga debtors did, however, work hard to produce profitable cash crops or at least to buy back some of their former lands (Thurston, 1909, vol. 1, 64; Ranga, 1934, 4; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249).

With the First World War, major changes in their marketing practices became apparent. Tea, coffee and cinchona, like potato, presuppose a market beyond the Nilgiris, which in turn presupposes adequate transportation. The crucial demand for vegetables to feed the numerous European troops in India, Burma, Malaya and Ceylon stimulated the change in crops documented above (see Table 2). Similar conditions arose again in the Second World War and prompted many more Badagas to try commercial farming. On each occasion cultivators took the risk of exporting potatoes and other vegetables to new and remote markets, and some made handsome profits (Francis, 1908, 167). The risks in this enterprise were real, for men could recall occasions when floods broke the road or rail connections or the goods reached their destination only after market prices had fallen heavily. The rewards of potato cultivation were, however, of critical importance in lifting the yoke of indebtedness: during World War II the British made a great deal of capital available to Badaga farmers, as part of the 'Grow More Food' campaign. This finance and the profits from selling their highly priced potatoes did more than any cooperative loan facility to relieve the indebtedness that Badagas had been suffering under for several decades.

While tea and coffee yield a higher profit per hectare than potatoes or grains, they are more susceptible to disease than the millets and require greater agricultural skill than all other Nilgiri crops if they are to attain the standards required by wholesale purchasing agents. Moreover they need to be produced in large enough quantity to warrant the processing and transportation to Bombay (since 1940, to Cochin). Middlemen, both Badagas and others, were therefore indispensable to the few Badaga tea and coffee growers of the 1920s and 1930s. Middlemen could act as a

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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was mostly in steep rocky places ill-suited to any cultivation.)

14. Grigg, 1880, 321, mentions there were 29,912 acres (12,105 ha.) of farming land on the plateau in 1862–1863 but considers this 'a fictitious number'. Fifteen years earlier Ouchterlony had estimated that the Badagas alone used 12,750 ha.; Grigg, 1880, 13.

15. It is 19 km. by road from Ootacamund and embraces the Badaga commune of So:lu:ru.

16. That Sholur was not atypical in this respect is suggested by the fact that in 1867 the average number of persons per Badaga household for the entire district was 4.36; Shortt & Ouchterlony, 1868, 61.

17. Land utilization figures for the entire district, 1905–1960, in Nambiar (1965), do not isolate the role of Badaga agriculture.

18. Ranga, 1934, 68. As early as 1908 Francis (p. 167) noted: 'Potatoes are much exported to Ceylon, the Straits [Malaya] and Burma . . .' It was in 1908 that the railway connecting Ootacamund with the plains was completed.

19. Ranga, 1934, 14–15, 18–22. 'In fact many planters advance money to Badagas to enable them to dig pits and plant tea . . . with the intention of being able to purchase that land'; Ranga, 1934, 15.

20. Merchants also granted credit for purchase of daily needs—at much inflated prices; Ranga, 1934, 73–74; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 249. Such traders are an excellent example of Simmel's 'resident stranger', whose presence catalyses a peasant economy by affording credit; Simmel, 1923, 509–512.

21. De:vaso:le, Kolekombe, Sc:las, Gudalu:ru, Manju:ru, Ki:kotagiri, Nedugula, and Naduvatta; Baikie, 1857, 38, 88; Grigg, 1880, 471.

22. Nambiar, 1965, 23. The first time this problem beset Badaga farmers was in 1880; B.E.M.S., 1880, no. 41, 37; Grigg, 1880; 134.

23. Ranga, 1934, 7–9. Badaga contractors had been involved in such work since the mid-nineteenth century; McPherson, 1870, 21.

24. Natesa Sastri, 1892, 753; Francis, 1908, 129; Thurston, 1909, vol. I, 63; Ranga, 1934, 8; Vivekanandam Pillai, 1937, 248. These jobs included builders, blacksmiths, brickmakers, carpenters, clerks, domestic servants, painters, gardeners, washermen, teachers, printers, forest guards, tailors, barbers, water-carriers, stone-breakers, rickshaw-pullers, and even coolies and scavengers.

25. Jagor, 1876, 201–202; unlike most Hindus the Badagas do not employ washermen.

26. These were mainly Christians.

27. The categories are taken from the 1961 *Census of India*.

28. The designation is not recent; Francis, 1908, 265. On the Backward Classes generally, see Béteille, 1969, 87–145. Very recently the Nilgiri Hill Tribe Badaga Welfare Association was formed to promote government action in classifying Badagas as Scheduled Tribe, which would have material advantages for the community.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

themselves are the women's work-groups, small cliques of village wives who work together in the fields and elsewhere, exchanging gossip and favours in the process. These female networks link up with the male ones through the wives of influential men (cf. Plate 10).

The sequence of contacts that have to be made if someone in the village is to influence or be influenced by people in the above list constitutes an intra-village network.

Inter-Village Networks

Two kinds of network fall under this heading, one linking agnates, the second affines. The first are ritual and juridical networks, linking up with distantly related men in other villages of the commune. This commune was first settled, it is claimed, by a man who founded the maximal lineage to which nearly all of the inhabitants belong. Hulla:ḍa people mostly belong to one of the three major lineages, this one established by Koṅga Hetappa, one of the commune founder's three sons. Within Hulla:ḍa and a nearby village (Ke:ti) the lineage is further divided into four minimal lineages, each descended from one of Koṅga Etappa's four sons. The more important festivals are celebrated in common by all sixteen villages in the commune, using ritual personnel from any of these villages. Serious problems are discussed by all the village headmen at the commune council. Hulla:ḍa villagers can establish contact with the wealthiest and most influential men in the commune by activating these two networks, either through a village headman or through a friend who has helped in the rituals.

Secondly, the marriage and visiting networks link Hulla:ḍa with villages beyond this commune. Marriages account for a network of social contacts with nearly two dozen other villages, and these are frequently activated by informal visits and by attendance at the festivals, weddings and funerals of affines. Small loans may be sought along these networks (Hockings, in press).

Inter-Tribal Networks

The Badagas of Hulla:ḍa were linked for certain economic and ritual purposes with particular Kotas, Todas, Kurumbas and Chettis. For the most part these associations have fallen into

241 has greatly improved, it is worth noting, because the state government has made loans available on relatively easy terms for the purpose of having field terraces constructed.

Because of terracing in many places, and widespread subdivision, fields are often so small that it would be markedly inefficient to plow them at any time (Ranga 1934: 12-13; Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 249). For the past 25 years, therefore, the plow and oxen have ceased to be used in the Nilgiri Hills. Much of the work-load formerly carried by oxen is now taken by the spades of cheap migrant laborers from the plains: men work for daily wages of Rs. 1.75, equivalent to about 35¢ U.S., and women for about 30¢.

While the profits from potato, tea and coffee are very much higher per acre than those from the traditional grain crops, the risks are also much higher. Not only does a farmer need ready cash to buy seed or cuttings, fertilizer and labor, but he may need cash to feed his family if disease ruins the crop for one season. Here the cooperative societies set up by the state government have helped the Badagas greatly. Both short- and long-term loans are available, against land or house securities, for all members of the societies (Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 249). The societies have thus gone far in protecting Badagas from the high interest-rates of private money-lenders; some societies even help farmers by supplying seeds, fertilizers, and modern implements at cost prices.

Marketing

Traditionally the Badagas, Kotas and Todas occupied a very peripheral position in a market economy: before the British reached the Nilgiris annual trading expeditions to the market at Gundlupet, in Mysore, or to Erramadai, were the source for the few requirements not otherwise available in the Hills. Such

454 tions.

The period between the two World Wars saw the rise not only of wealthy 178
Badaga land-owners, but also of labor contractors. A few men profited by getting (556)
contracts to build roads or construct public buildings in the District. Two patterns (454)
of reinvestment were common among such men: one was in land (Ranga 1934: 10), even in tea and coffee estates; the other was in college education for their sons. Less wealthy Badagas during the same period set themselves up as small shop-keepers or money-lenders, or, hired themselves out as builders, carpenters, water-carriers and even coolies (Francis 1908: 129; Ranga 1934: 8).

For many Badagas with small land-holdings, this period of transition was •426
marked by the frustrations of indebtedness. Pieces of land were sometimes sold (178)
to non-Badagas in order to pay off outstanding debts; but in general Badaga debtors tried to honor their obligations, and worked hard either to produce profitable cash crops or to buy back their former lands (Thurston 1909: I, 64; Ranga 1934: 4; Vivekanandam Pillai 1937: 249).

We may say that the take-off for economic growth within the cash economy 178
was complete by 1930, when most of the Badagas had permanently severed their 648
traditional exchange-relationship with the Kotas. This, from the Badaga point of (439)
view, was an advantageous move, for it allowed them to buy pottery, ropes and metal goods in the bazaar at a lower price than the Kotas were getting. This is not to say that Kotas had been receiving cash; but the traditional dole of grain they were given at each harvest was becoming increasingly costly to the Badagas because of rising grain prices. We shall discuss this point further when we come to consider recent factions (see Chapters VII and VIII).

178 While tea and coffee yield the highest profit per acre, they require